

## ABSTRACT

Title: The construction and mummification of nurses - In television and in the images of students -

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Due to structural changes and a high average age in the staff, the health care sector has a need to recruit new staff. A description of recruitment campaigns showed that they contain stereotypes from popular culture. After examining demands of the statutes for nursing profession the explicit view of the society is that nursing is an independent profession regarding nursing. The message from the caring practice, viewed from an official investigation, is partly contradictory to the laws and statutes. One question is to what extent these different images have an influence on nursing students perceptions. The aim of this thesis is to describe and interpret how the nurse is constructed and portrayed in the television media, and to describe which conceptions of nursing the nursing students' have when they start their education. Finally the aim is to relate different images to an ideological discourse that concerns the nursing profession in reference to gender, power and equality. The study contains two substudies. The purpose of the first study is to describe how the nurse is constructed in television series in a healthcare context, the purpose in the second is to describe nursing students images of nursing. The overall theoretical approach comes from the scientific field of Feminist Culture Studies. The concepts, which are prominent, are ideology, hegemony and discourse. Feminist theory is used to explain how a construction of women is made and to shed light on woman in relation to power and equality. Constructionism is the overall starting-point, and it is related to the methods that are used. In sub-study 1, three television series were selected for the study and are regarded as stories. The results is presented as five new stories. In study 2, the empirical material contains written stories from the students. The data led to three constructed portraits. The main result shows that images of nursing from nursing students are stable and exists in changeable forms. It relates to the concept mummification by being a concept that has survived through the years and basically kept stable. The changeable is how the stable expresses itself. Independence is brought forward in the students stories and expressed in the society's official discourse about the profession but is not present in the television series. There is a hegemony in the television series that says that the nursing profession is female. Conventions about the nurse as a feminine woman is conveyed and it is constructed by established ideas at a denotative level.